

Build-A-Bed Update

By Carrie Stith-Webster, KCCVS Training Officer



The spring of 2009 marked the inaugural year for Build-A-Bed, a project with the goal of providing beds for children in need. The 2010 event was 24-hour, 500-bed build and the opening project for National AmeriCorps Week in May 2010. The project has become a community partnership project, involving many more groups than just AmeriCorps. The regional build model was implemented in 2011, and several local builds have already taken place to help achieve the goal of providing children a proper place to sleep.

Heather Musinski, AmeriCorps FRYSC Corps program director, developed and implemented training for Regional Build Team Leaders and 30 team leaders have been trained so far. In addition to the training, team leaders

received tool kits with some start-up supplies such as glue, a how-to manual, pajamas, toothbrushes and toothpaste.

Morehead Build Event

The MSU Corps at Morehead State University partnered with outreach groups at the university, including Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Adult Education and College Access, the Center for Regional Engagement, Youth-Build and Gateway House, and held a bed build event on Saturday, March 12. The original plan was to build 50 beds and the planning committee knew \$4,000 was needed to build those beds. However, with everyone helping, they easily raised \$7,000 – enabling the group to build 71 beds! The fundraising efforts spanned 12 counties, and all MSU Corps AmeriCorps members were able to contribute to the effort. Nearly all of the 70 bedtime bags were filled by donations and members' contributions. The remaining bedtime bags were filled with items purchased through a small grant written to the Family Dollar store. Each of the bedtime bags contained sheets, a pillow, a blanket or comforter, a book, toothpaste and a toothbrush, a night light, a stuffed animal and pajamas. Nearly 100 community volunteers assisted with the project. According to the MSU Corps staff, great partnerships with several community/campus members helped drive the success of the event. MSU Corps are hoping to replicate this project next spring utilizing the connections they have made with area high school tech/vocational schools who have indicated an interest in partnering next year.



Frankfort Build Event



The Frankfort Build-A-Bed event took place on Saturday, May 14, at the National Guard Armory. Members of AmeriCorps Tribal Civilian Community Corps (TCCC), came from Hoopa, California to assist, and they were a tremendous help! Hoopa TCCC, a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, is a team-based, nine-month tribal residential program for young men and women ages 18-24 years old. Members reside on a campus located on the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation in Northern California. The Hoopa TCCC members stayed at the United Methodist Church in Lawrenceburg. The church and the National Guard have both proven to be great partners for the local Build-A-Bed project. In fact, the National Guard leadership was so pleased with how things went that they've asked to host another build next year. When the sawdust settled, 235 volunteers built 100 beds. So far, more than 40 beds and bedtime bags have been distributed.

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Marion Build Event

Most recently, a very successful build was organized by ATEAM AmeriCorps member Mary Ann Winders in Crittenden County. The original plan called for 15 beds to be built, but, due to the generosity of the community, they were able to build 22 beds. The build was held in the shop at the Crittenden County High School. Unique to this build was the method used to build the beds – Mr. Larry Duvall, the shop teacher, was able to visualize the most efficient method of putting the beds together and recommended an assembly-line style set-up. Volunteers were able to build 19 beds in just three hours! This is the first build event to be done assembly-line style. Volunteers came from several local churches; The Kentucky Council of Crime and Delinquency in Lyon County, local middle and high schools. Children as young as 19 months old helped to decorate the bed slats.



All of the necessary hardware and wood needed for the beds was donated and all of the wood was stained before the build by folks who had court-ordered community service they had to perform. A generous supporter donated funds to purchase all of the mattresses and everything in bedtime bags, with the exception of a few items purchased for older children. The contents of the bedtime bags were organized according to the needs of the recipient child, so that all of the children would have pajamas that fit, and most bags had three or four pairs in them. One of the recipients of a bed was a pregnant 14-year-old who had been sleeping on the floor. A bag was put together that had "extras" in it -- diapers, baby wipes, powder and other items needed for baby as well as mom.



"The people who I see in life that are the happiest, the most fulfilled, and have a sparkle in their eyes are those who have a huge component of service in their lives and in some form or fashion give to other people besides themselves." ~Paul Tudor Jones



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